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The Players turn'd Academicks:

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OR, A

DESCRIPTION

(*In Merry Metre*)

Of their Translation from the Theatre in *Little
Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, to the *Tennis-Court* in
OXFORD.

WITH A

PREFACE

Relating to the Proceedings of
the University the last ACT: As also the
Wadhamite Prologue that was Spoken there,
with a *Prologue* and *Epilogue*, by way of
Answer to it, at the *Theatre Royal*.

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year MDCCHII.



THE

Publisher to the Reader.

HAVING got possession of the following Poem by accident, I thought something so Particular in it, as to deserve a Publication. Not that I am for encouraging Reflections, but where the General Cry is after a Reformation of Manners, I would set those that are Obstructors of it in a True Light. And here I could wish the Poet, who is altogether unknown to me, had carried his Design farther, not seen his Players just out of Town, but follow'd 'em down to the University, where he might have found a copious Field for Satyr. Had I been acquainted with him, I could have furnish'd him with Materials enough, relating both to the Stage and Theatre, and given him an Account that neither the Scholars did their Business to a General Satisfaction, nor the Players theirs; but I hope he intends to pursue the Thread of his Discourse, and give us farther Characters of their several Persons and Performances.

In the mean time I cannot but give the World to understand, that never was such wretched Acting seen by those who go under the Name of Her Majesty's Servants, and never such Failures in attempting after Wit, by those who have the Characters of Scholars, since Oxford had its first Foundation. So that the Stage shew'd as much Disrespect to the University by carrying down so Imperfect a Company, as the University did to the Nobility and Gentry, by Inviting 'em down to See and Hear, what was not worth their while to take the Pains of a Journey for.

The Publisher to the Reader.

But here I invade our Author's Province in one part, that is, in my Observations on the Stage, I shall therefore make some Remarks on the Performances of the University, and so leave the Reader to divert himself with what the Poet has brought him for an Entertainment.

The Honourable Mr. Bertie was the Gentleman that open'd the ACT, who is an Exception to any Imputation whatsoever, and came off like a Gentleman of Birth and Scholarship; but where the greatest Expectations were, there happen'd to be the greatest Deficiencies. The University, at other Publick Acts, us'd to be furnish'd with two Terræ Filii, one by each Proctor, but at this Juncture the whole Business was laid upon Mr. R——'s shoulder, whose Excellence in one thing must be prefer'd before all that went before him, and will come after, for it's not in Nature to produce a more jejune and empty Speech than his was.

His great Humanity to the University of Cambridge cannot enough be admir'd at, for his Incivility was as inoffensive, as his Compliments were fulsom: His particular Regard to the Fair Sex, may be seen in the barbarous Treatment of the Lady Price, and her Daughters, and his Contempt of Knowledge in Abusing those who had more than himself, as a Doctor whom he prov'd to have a Rational Soul, only because he brought in his Mother to sell Ginger-bread to the College which he belong'd to.

Had such weak Argumentations, insipid Reflections, insupportable Ignorance, been heard in any other Place, they would have been worthy of farther Remarks; but my Respects to the Vice-Chancellor, who has the sole Honour of being the Occasion of this Publick ACT, obliges me to cease Animadverting on it.

29 MA 55

THE

T H E

Oxford Expedition.

When *Money*, and *Manners*, were both a decaying,
 And the Town stood in need more of *Preaching* than
 When the *Sins* of the *Stage* more *Exorbitant* grew, (Playing.
 And call'd upon *Collier* for another *Review* ;
 As *Informers* on double *Entaindres* laid hold,
 And cast the *New-House*, tho' they could not the *Old* :
 'Twas then the sage *Rulers* of *Oxford* thought fit,
 To Relinquish the *Fathers* and *School-men* for *Wit*,
 Quit the *Stagyrite* for *D'Urfey*, and each in his *Station*,
 Set his Hand to the Work of a *Thorough Reformation*.

In order t' accomplish a *Business* so great,
 It was wisely Consulted in a *Learned Debate*,
 What Measures were proper to reclaim all *Abuses*,
 And resettle a *Commerce* between them and the *Muses*.
 This, and that, was propos'd, as a *Means* for *Redress*,
 And some shew'd their *Knowledge*, and some shew'd their *Guess*,
 Till at last 'twas concluded no *Cure* could be found,
 Unless that which caus'd it, should close up the *Wound* ;
 Like the wonderful force of the *Marvelous Steel*,
 That with one *Touch* could *Wound*, and another could *Heal*.

Nor Doctors, nor Physick Professor could do,
 So Incureable fast the Malignity grew,
 When as good luck would have it to mend their Condition,
 They pitch'd on *Tom B---n* for their Physician.

Old *Tom* was a growling, and thinking in vain,
 How to baffle th' *Old House*, and to break *Drury-Lane*,
 How to bring his *Hay-Market* Projection to bear,
 And with Capt. *V---* build Castles in the Air.
 When a Letter arriv'd at his Booth with the News,
 Of the Choice had been made of his *Quack* of a Muse,
 And that if he pleas'd it was Matter of Fact,
 He might Strut, and come down to look Big at the ACT.

Say ye so? said the Monarch, *recover'd our Trade is,*
Away Mark and Peplo, go Summon the Ladies,
For the rest of the Sharers you may let 'em alone,
We Three can conclude what's fit to be done,
 And off from his Couch his Mock Majesty rose,
 With the Devil in his Heart, and the Gout in his Toes.
 Resolv'd to get Mony by Methods acute,
 And graciously grant the Vice-Chancellor's Suit.

29 MA 55

Advis'd by the Females who came to his Aid,
 And back'd by the Modest good *Matron* and *Maid*,
 'Twas agreed on all Hands, that he down should be sped,
 And the *Tail* sit at Helm, in the room of the Head.
 While their Time and their Labour the Underlins spent,
 To pay for the Use of the *Cloaths*, and *House-Rent*,
 Dispersing *Long-Bills*, and Amuzing the Town,
 For Mony to carry the Chief of 'em down,
 For had all shar'd alike, there would be no dispute,
 But *Br---* would have scorn'd to have Travell'd a Foot,
 Bea

Beat the Hoof thro' the Roads where their Ladyships Rode;
 As Senseless and Dull as the Ground which he Trod;
 Tho' in hopes to return an Intelligent Creature,
 By the Visit he made to the Fam'd *Alma-Mater*,
 And be *Learn'd* spight of want of a Rational Nature.

And now the Day came when all *Matters* prepar'd,
 Their *Accoutrements* ready, and their *Deal-Boards* were rear'd
 They Pick'd, and they Cull'd, who would passively serve,
 And submit without Murm'ring to Act on, and Starve,
 And the Places of *Dogget* and *Powell* supply'd,
 With Comedy *W---* and Tragedy *L---*.
 Both Men of *Great Parts*, and of *Antient Renown*,
 The Discourse of the *Country*, and the hopes of the *Town*,
 Who had been far and near good *Behaviour* to learn,
 And had play'd in a *Stable* for want of a *Barn*,
 Two wonders of Men, good enough by the By,
 To make some People *Laugh*, and make other Folks *Cry*.

The first that took Coach, and had often took--,
 Was the fam'd Mrs. *B---* with *P--x* at her *A---*,
 A Tool of a Scribe, and a Poetress great,
 That was said to *Write* well, because well she could *Treat*,
 And for her sake had written her Husband in *Debt*.
 While *Carrol*, her Sister-Adventurer in Print,
 Took her Leave all in Tears, with a *Curt'sie* and *Squint*,
 And would certainly take the same Journey as she,
 Had she not giv'n away *Medicin Malgre Lui*.

And where's He or She breaths that dares but attest,
 That *B---* had ever Deceit in her Breast?
 That she knowingly wrong'd any Soul in her Life,
 Whether Man, Child, Maid, Spinstress, or Woman, or Wife,
 That

That she wickedly harbour'd a Lawless Intent,
 Or Traffick'd for *Debts* at a Hundred *per Cent*,
Brooks may say what she pleases, 'tis false and uncivil,
 She, deal in Stock-jobbing! She, deal with the Devil!

They may as well call her a B---, I affirm,
 Her Body a Common Receiver for _____
 The Refuse of the Town now she's Wrinkled and Old,
 Yet a Hackney that now stands at *Livery* for Gold,
 Who not to be Idle makes it all the same Case,
 If she's let out for *Woolen*, or *Linnen*, or *Lace*.
 As Trunks full of each at her House do declare,
 She has *Dealt* more than *Once* for more than one *Ware*.

No, no, 'tis all Falshood, let the Splenetick Rail,
 She has got what she has by her *Mouth*, not her *Tail*,
 Tho' the *Mark's* almost out, as the *Features* decline,
 And that's *Love's* Sepulchre, which was *Love's* Shrine,
 Her Virtues have rais'd her to this insolent Pitch,
 And she must needs be *Good*, since she's known to be *Rich*.

The next to this Image of Stateliness fate,
 A Maidenhead not quite so w--- as my Hat,
 That at years of Discretion, Discretion had shewn,
 And had kept what she had from being Fly-blown.
 Making use of her *Secrets* as truly *her own*.

Down with her this Virgin most prudently took
 Dame B---n to serve her as *Foyl* and as *Cook*,
 Two Parts she could Act both in Knowledge and Look,
 With abundance of Washes, and Patches, and Paint,
 To tempt like a Devil, and appear like a Saint,
 And with Sentences borrow'd from *Congreve* and *Row*,
 Make the Schollars like her'fore the Beauty her Foe.

But

But all to no purpose, in vain's her pretence,
 To the Remnants, and Shreds of more exquisite Sense,
 The Nymph whom she Rivals with Gestures and Arts,
 Has Charms for all Eyes, and has Chains for all Hearts,
 Has Conquests attend her wherever she moves,
 Will claim all their Wonders, and excite all their Loves,
 As *PRINCE* is their Idol, their *Theme* and their *Song*,
 And *Her Eyes* do a Work, can't be done by *Her Tongue*,
 As her Youth, and her Face, must take place of her *Mien*,
 And the wrong side of *Thirty* give way to *Eighteen*.

Dame *F---se* of course ought to have the next Place,
 And fair Mrs. *P---n's* with her Cullender Face,
 Two Maidens of Honour to *B---* and *Br---*
 The first singled out from the Dregs of *May-Fair*,
 To be deck'd with the Name of her Majesty's Play'r,
 The last a Companion for none but the Sages,
 For hiring her Mistress to be hir'd for no Wages.

Now Room for a *C---* on forfeit of Life,
 An Amorous Fool, with his Amorous Wife,
 He always a *Courting*, and *Whining*, and *Trilling*,
 She never averse to the Business of *Billing*,
 But a mettlesome Tit full of *Frollick* and *Willing*.
 This I dare to affirm, never *Coach* and four *Hack*,
 Carry'd down such a Couple as *Betty* and *Dack*.

There was *Deary*, and *Dack*, and abundance of *Pother*,
 Both fond of themselves, as they'r fond of each other,
 And *My Love*, and *my Life*, how d'ye find your self now,
 Poor Heart you look ill, I *Protest*, and I *Vow*,
 With a many odd Questions too long to insert,
 That shew'd he had good *Nature*, and she had good *Art*,

As she made him believe he had *Merit* and *Charms*,
 And fancied one *Dack*, in another *Dack's* Arms.
 Who contented, and Happy, as Mortal could wish,
 Made Love to his Wife, and took nothing amiss,
 And would make up a Breach any time for a Kiss.
 Who dispelling all Sorrows, and Sadness by Singing,
 Had the World in a String, if but once got a Ringing,
 Tho' some Folks admire at his fancy for Bells,
 When his Bed-fellow Rings him such Conjugal Knells.

Cave Underhill should have a Place in my Song,
 But *Cave* is a Man that has practic'd no Wrong,
 Is Honest and Old, not a Subject for Satyr,
 An Actor of *Worth*, and a sociable Nature,
 Who never from Belch, Wine, or Brandy yet shrunk.
 Or refus'd an occasion to be heartily Drunk;
 He by no Thoughts of Interest thither was led,
 But to Booze at the Colleges, and the King's Head,
 To boast of his Pallat, and let the Town know,
 That his Heart was all Fire, tho' his Head was all Snow.

Fanny L— look'd as Arch as the Son of a *Tony*,
 And long'd to be fingring University Mony,
 Not doubting the Town would distinguish Deserts,
 And have a due Sense of his excellent Parts:
 But was told in his Ear, that the Students were cunning,
 And valu'd not Actors for *Blundering* and *Punning*,
 So that he must hope for small Profit, or Fame,
 If the People dislik'd him from whence he last came;
 However he'd serve well enough for the Place,
 Since Fool was abundantly writ in his Face,
 And the Scholars by him without Study or Pains,
 Might make out a *Pacuum* from his no Brains.

His

His Mother she smil'd and smil'd with much Joy,
 To think of the promising Parts of her Boy,
 And Admir'd ev'ry Sentence and Word which he spoke,
 Which ever was back'd with attempts at a Joke,
 As he dealt his *Conundrums* and *Quibbles* about,
 And shew'd no more Breeding or Knowledge than Trout.

Jack D---n's was resolv'd to make one with the Rest,
 And amongst 'em he thrust in his Corps, and his Jest,
 Both useless and old, and as much out of Date,
 As his Notional Form of a Common-wealth State,
 Which he had been hammering out of his Poll,
 And pleasing Old Nickby, in commending Old Noll.

The Republican Dotard sat stinking and sweating,
 And tagging his Lies with the Points of false Latin,
 While he set a broach Schemes, could be ne're put in Practice,
 And attested with Oaths what no Matter of Fact is,
 As he gave strange Accounts both of Farces and Plays,
 And brag'd of things done, in *Hart's* and *Mohun's* Days.

The Company smoak'd what he meant by his Prating,
 And excus'd him from paying for Drinking and Eating,
 By letting him sponge both for Victuals and Bub,
 And lay down his impudent Lies for his Club;
 For he durst not for fear of great hazard of Life,
 But bring what he Got to his Termagant Wife,
 Who had Midwif'd him out of his Money and Wit,
 And prompted the Prompter to do what she thought fit,
 As she Rein'd him, and Rid him, with Spur and with Bit.

The Ladies all seated, and the Men in their Places,
 And a good Journey wish'd to their Draggie-tayl'd Graces,
 By *Allcraft*, and those in their Sheds, or their Cales.

Ge-hap, was the Word, and away Drove the Van;
 As merry as Crickets, Maid, Woman and Man,
 Having each been allow'd a whole Penny-worth of *Waters*,
 Which their Treasurer Book'd with the rest of their matters.

Jack Fr— would fain have annex'd to his Scores,
 A peremptory Quartern of beloved *All-Fours*.
 But his Suit over-ru'd he jogg'd on from his Duns,
 In hopes of some Victuals and Drink at *St. John's*,
 Which if they don't grant him they'r very unkind,
 Since they shou'd feed his Body, that ne're fed his Mind.

But, sure, such a Carravan never was seen,
 Her Majesty's *Strolers*! Pray, God bless the Queen!
 Some a Foot, some on Horseback attended the Coaches,
 And as their Beasts let 'em made their several approaches;
 Some with Spurs and no Boots, some with Boots and no Spurs;
 Their Horses no bigger than *Bear-Garden* Curs;
 As they went not so swift as do Arrows from Bows,
 And mounted *Chevats* should be mounted by Crows.

So much for the Rabble, we no farther need see 'em,
 They are gone out of Town, and good Luck e'en go with 'em,
 It's a mercy, say I, they so well are departed,
 And Coach it, when Story says *The spin* was Carted.
 Nor shall I determine their Charges, or Gains,
 Or what they will have in return for their Pains;
 Let the Sharers do that, it's their Province alone,
 That's a Secret by none but themselves must be known.
 Only this by the By I dare venture to speak,
 When they come up again they will come up and break.
 So those in their Minds who Sedition revolv'd,
 In *Eighty* saw *Oxford*, and came back Dissolv'd.

A PREFATORY

PROLOGUE

By way of INTRODUCTION,

*To one Spoken by Mr. Betterton at OXFORD,
on Monday the 5th. of July.*

*Spoken by Mr. Mills at the Theatre Royal in Dru-
ry-Lane, on Friday the 16th. of July, and Fri-
day the 23d. 1703.*

AS *Paupers* who on Charity are fed,
Shou'd bless their absent Patrons for their Bread,
Tho' for a while no wonted Bounty's fall,
And pious Ears are distant from their Call:
So would we let our Gratitude be seen,
Both for our Friends that *are*, and Friends have *been*;
To these, that by their Gracious Smiles we Live;
To those, for Favours they vouchsaf'd to give;
But to'ther House has other Methods chose,
And treat their distant Friends like common Foes:
Traduce their Judgments, and their Sense deride,
Who never Judg'd *amiss*, but on *their side*;
Like Mercenary's reeking from the Stews,
Who in one Lover's Arms the rest Abuse.
Nothing have we to please you that is New,
In them ev'n Ridicule is out of View,
And not a Subject left since they withdrew.
Satyr is lost in this deserted Town,
And we can give no Scandal but their own:

D

Accept

Accept it then, 'tis inoffensive Writ,
 And take their Satyr on *Themselves* for Wit:
 Since it's base Spite your Characters secures,
 And shews their want of Sense in blaming yours,
 As you distinguish ours from their Designs,
 And know their grateful Temper by their Lines.

*Here Mr. Mills Reads the Prologue that Mr. Betterton
 Spoke at Oxford.*

A
PROLOGUE
 To the University of *Oxford*,

Spoken by Mr. Betterton, on Monday, July
 the 5th. 1703.

ONce more our *London* Muses pleas'd repair,
 To this blest Seat, and breath their Native Air;
 Here seek Protection from their Kindred Gown,
 Glad to retire from that degenerate Town:
 Where spurious Criticks in false Judgment sit,
 Debauch'd with Farce, and negligent of Wit;
 Our Indignation equally they raise,
 Whether they Frown, or Smile, upon our Plays,
 And Damn us with the Scandal of their Praise.

Now, to our wish, we have an Audience found,
 Which will be pleas'd with Sense, as well as Sound;
 You only can Reform th' Unthinking Age,
 Redeem our Credit lost, and Dignify the Stage.
 Wit is your Growth, and now ('tis all we crave)
 Retrieve that Honour which before you gave:

Poetry

Poetry yet will thrive, if rais'd by You;
 As Plants their fading Vigour will renew,
 From that kind Soil in which at first they Grew.

Your Learned Censures will Instruct the Town,
 And teach them when to Smile, and when to Frown,
 And by your Judgment to Improve their own.
 You as Wits Higher Powers our Doom reveal,
 From whose decisive Court there's no Appeal.

Then rise *Athenians*! in the just Defence
 Of Poetry oppress'd, and long neglected Sence;
 The Reputation of our Art advance,
 Suppress th' Exorbitance of Song and Dance,
 And in one Pow'rful Party Conquer *France*:

Nor have we Vicious Entertainments brought;
 You safely may Approve, and Smile without a Fault.
 With shame we must confess, our City Guests
 Have been regal'd with such unwholsome Feasts;
 Wit Grediness the fulsome Bait they sieze,
 And Dress'd in Vice, ev'n Sence it self will please.

But now w'have nought t'offend the Chastest Ear,
 You from imputed Crimes our Stage shall clear,
 For none will blush to own, what you vouchsafe to hear.

Thus far their Poet, who might Blush to View
 An Audience he Condemns in Cens'ring You:
 If Pens Immodest, what was Modest knew.

Now on Your side the *London* Muse should rise,
 And Vindicate whom all that know must prize;
 But you'll give Leave, Our Answer be delay'd,
 Till in the following Scenes our Duty's pay'd:
 Those finish'd once, and Honour'd with your Sight,
 Our *Epilogue* shall do their *Prologue* Right.

*The Epilogue, by way of Answer, to the foregoing
Prologue, Spoken by Mr. Mills.*

HAD *Athens* all the *Grecian* Sense Engross'd,
Thebes had of course the glorious *Pindar* lost;
 The *Spartan* Genius would but dimnly shine,
 And *Lacedemon* shew a worthless Line:
 Just so would Wits Affairs in *Britain* stand,
 Should *Oxford* hold the Stocks of all the Land;
London's Emporium Bankrupt would appear
 And *Cambridge* cease to boast an Off-spring here,
 Whose Judgments we must ever praise and fear.

Not that we'd speak, without an Aweful Dread,
 Of what such learned Ornaments has bred,
 Far be the Thought, and distant the Intent,
 We Live by the Supports which all have lent;
 And tender of our own, and Patron's Fame,
 Must never Act the Faults we come to Blame.

Your *Frowns* and *Smiles*, whom others treat with *Scorn*,
 Have been by Us with due Submission born:
 The First we'll make Endeavours to avoid,
 The Last with Thankfulness shall be enjoy'd,
 As we Exert our Strength and utmost Pow'r,
 To sink their Tottering Stage by raising Our.

What e're they mean's a Secret yet unknown,
 For sure they cannot mean to Act in Town,
 Or hope Your Presence will set out their Plays,
 And * Scandalize 'em more with Grants of Praise.

* Vid.
Ox. Prolog.

No, no, as then Compassion made you kind,
 Let just Resentments work upon your Mind,
 Support our Interest, and Our Cause assist,
 Nor stand by them, whom those they Flatter'd * Hiss'd,
 Who spight of Panegyricks on the Gown,
 Justly reveal their Judgment in their Frown:

* The Prolog.
was Hiss'd three
Days following.

As they find Fault with Songs, by Songs preserv'd,
 And Laugh at Follies, but for which they'd Starv'd,
 As they their Gratitude by Railing prove,
 And shew their Modesty by Love * for Love,
 Lest you, not they, should lessen your Esteem,
 And give your selves the Scandal given to them.

* The first Play
they Acted, at
which the Prolog
was Spoken.

F I N I S.